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STORROW DRIVE TUNNEL INTERIM REPAIRS MOVING FORWARD

Outside review of tunnel project gives green light to the work

Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) officials plan to accept bids later this month for what are expected to be \$8-\$10 million in interim repairs to the Storrow Drive Tunnel, which carries eastbound (inbound) traffic through Boston's Back Bay neighborhood.

In November, DCR hired LMI Government Consulting, a nonprofit strategic consulting firm headquartered near Washington, D.C., to conduct a peer review of the Storrow Drive Tunnel project. A preliminary report by LMI reinforces the findings of DCR and the agency's lead engineers on the project that interim repairs will maintain and ensure the integrity of the tunnel.

"Although the report is not yet finalized, preliminary conclusions support our moving forward immediately with interim repairs," said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr. "LMI's findings bolster DCR's assessment that these repairs should be made."

David Gallay, director of infrastructure and engineering for LMI concurred, saying, "Our technical evaluation suggests that the proposed interim repairs are appropriate and sound."

LMI's contract with DCR included conducting a technical engineering review of the findings of the agency's lead engineers, SGH Consulting Inc. The firm looked at each construction option being considered for the tunnel and assessed it based on, among other things, the technical, environmental, and safety risks; political, legal, and management issues; and cost. The review also looked at all the proposed project and condition assessments, the basic engineering concepts employed, and the recommendations for action.

DCR plans to advertise the project today, February 6, and receive bids on February 27. Work is expected to start mid-April and continue for about 9 months.

Prior to the start of construction, DCR will hold a public meeting to address the community's questions and concerns on traffic management and other construction issues. In the meantime, the agency is finishing \$430,000 in immediate repairs to the drainage system and structural beams in the tunnel.

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